



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

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Plan a Fun and Safe Labor Day Weekend Trip to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

Are you planning to spend Labor Day weekend at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks? A fun and safe vacation requires a lot more than just sunscreen and bug spray. Consider the following park vacation planning tips:

- Have you stopped by a park visitor center lately? The staff can give you ideas on the best places to visit in the parks and how to do so safely.
- Visit the parks' website at www.nps.gov/seki for basic trip planning information including highlights of what to see and safety tips. The park newspaper, *The Guide*, is a very good resource. An advance copy is available at: www.nps.gov/seki/parknews/newspaper.htm.
- Park and Ride... Take a free park shuttle to reduce your stress level, traffic congestion, and your carbon footprint. Free in-park shuttles operate daily in the Giant Forest/Lodgepole area of Sequoia National Park through September 9 between approximately 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., depending upon the route. All shuttles are wheelchair-accessible. Moro Rock and Crescent Meadow will only be open to park shuttles, no other vehicular traffic, from Sept. 1-3. Vehicles with handicapped placards are exempt from this rule. For more information, please visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/parktransit.htm.
- Transportation may be available from outside the parks. The Sequoia Shuttle provides transportation round-trip from Visalia, Exeter, or Three Rivers to Sequoia National Park's Giant Forest Museum, where you can transfer to the free in-park shuttle. For details and reservations, visit www.sequoiashuttle.com or call 1-877-BUS-HIKE.
- Don't forget the basics on your adventure. Plan to:
 - Bring food and water on your hikes. Restaurants and stores are limited in the park.
 - Apply sunscreen liberally throughout the day.
 - Avoid personal contact with wildlife. Wild animals are meant to be "wild." Do not try to feed, pet, or touch them at any time.

– continued on page 2 –

– continued from page 1 –

- Avoid contact with feces/droppings, nests, and burrows of rodents. Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome and the Plague are rare but serious diseases throughout the United States that may occur through contact in this way. For more information, see the following attachment.
- Be sure to leave food or scented items in food-storage boxes (or “lockers”) where available. Food-storage boxes are available adjacent to most well-used parking lots in the park. Never leave food in your car, even during the day. Where park-provided food-storage boxes are not available, especially when visiting the wilderness, consider carrying it with you.
- Road construction zones are in place. From 6 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 31 through 7 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 4, expect maximum 20-minute delays with traffic lights along the Generals Highway, the main road through the parks. For additional road construction information, visit either of the following webpages:
<http://www.nps.gov/seki/parknews/index.htm>
<http://www.nps.gov/seki/parknews/upload/Road-Construction-Flyer-Aug-24-Sep-8-2012.pdf>
- California is experiencing a very dry year and fire danger is high. You can help prevent human-caused fires by following the parks' fire restrictions.
 - No wood or barbecue fires are permitted below 6,000 feet, except in designated campgrounds. Areas affected by the restrictions include Ash Mountain Picnic Area, Hospital Rock Picnic Area, and wilderness travel below 6,000 feet. Gas or propane stoves may be used at all elevations.
 - No smoking below 6,000 feet is permitted, except within a developed area, a campground, an enclosed vehicle, or a building which allows smoking.
 - Many human-caused fires are accidentally started by cars. Proper maintenance of catalytic converters, radiators, mufflers, and your brakes can go a long way to prevent fires along the parks roadways.

For additional information about how to plan your holiday adventure, visit <http://www.nps.gov/seki>, call 559-565-3341, or stop by any park visitor center.

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